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# Biden announcing historic Grand Canyon monument designation during his Arizona visit

By Chris Megerian and Terry Tang  
Associated Press

**TUSAYAN, Ariz. (AP)** — President Joe Biden will use his visit to Arizona on Tuesday to formally announce a national monument designation for the greater Grand Canyon, making Native American tribes' and environmentalists' decades-long vision to preserve the land a reality. Biden is expected to announce plans for a new national monument to preserve about 1,562 square miles (4,046 square kilometers) just outside Grand Canyon National Park, national climate adviser Ali Zaidi confirmed. It will mark the Democratic president's fifth monument designation. Tribes in Arizona have been pushing Biden to use his authority under the Antiquities Act of 1906 to create a new national monument called Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni. "Baaj Nwaavjo" means "where tribes roam," for the Havasupai people, while "I'tah Kukveni" translates to "our footprints," for the Hopi tribe.

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The Grand Canyon is seen while in flight from Air Force One, with President Joe Biden aboard, en route to Grand Canyon National Park Airport, Monday, Aug. 7, 2023, in Grand Canyon Village, Ariz.

(AP Photo/Alex Brandon)

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# A proposed constitutional change before Ohio voters could determine abortion rights in the state



Voters come and go at the Beachwood Community Center in Beachwood, Ohio, Tuesday morning, Aug. 8, 2023, to vote on Issue 1, an abortion rights amendment, during the special election to decide the issue.

(David Petkiewicz/Cleveland.com via AP)

By Julie Carr Smyth and Samantha Hendrickson  
Associated Press  
COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Voters in Ohio on Tuesday

are weighing whether to make it more difficult to change the state's constitution, a decision that will have national implications

in the debate over the future of abortion rights in the United States.

The proposal on the ballot, known as Issue 1, would raise the threshold for passing future changes to the Ohio Constitution from a simple majority to 60%. That would raise the bar for another election in November, when voters in the state are scheduled to consider a constitutional amendment that would guarantee access to abortion.

With that in mind, voters are turning out in massive numbers for a summer special election. During the early voting period, which ended Sunday, the number of advance ballots cast hit nearly 700,000, more

than double the early vote during primary elections in 2018 and 2022, when high profile races for U.S. Senate and governor were on the ballot. The vote on Tuesday is poised to become the latest referendum on abortion rights since the U.S. Supreme Court's decision last year to rescind federal protections for the procedure, creating a state-by-state patchwork of restrictions and bans. Voters in other Republican-leaning states, including Kansas and Kentucky, have responded by protecting abortion access, and the issue helped Democrats limit their losses in last year's midterm elections.

Ohio could be well positioned to join the list of

conservative-leaning states moving to protect access to abortion. AP VoteCast polling last year found that 59% of Ohio voters say abortion should generally be legal. The campaign in favor of Issue 1, Protect Our Constitution, has told voters that raising the threshold will keep deep-pocketed interest groups from pushing redistricting, gun control and minimum wage policies on Ohio. One Person One Vote, the opposition campaign, argues that raising the threshold for passing future amendments would prioritize the interests of Ohio's increasingly conservative GOP supermajority at the statehouse over those of everyday voters. □

# Biden announcing historic Grand Canyon monument designation during his Arizona visit

Continued from Front

Arizona is a key battleground state that Biden won narrowly in 2020, becoming the first Democrat since Bill Clinton in 1996 to carry it. And it's one of only a few genuinely competitive states heading into next year's election. Winning Arizona would be a critical part of Biden's efforts to secure a second term. Later Tuesday, Biden will fly to New Mexico, considered safe for Democrats in 2024, and he will visit the Republican stronghold of Utah as part of his western swing later in the week.

Campaign politics aside, tribes and environmentalists for decades have been trying to safeguard the land north and south of Grand Canyon National Park, while Republican lawmakers and the mining industry tout the economic benefits and raise mining as a matter of national security.

The designation is a reminder of a "new era" in which collaboration and stewardship with tribes is valued, said U.S. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, the first Na-

tive American cabinet secretary. "It will help ensure that indigenous people can continue to use these areas for religious ceremonies, hunting and gathering of plants, medicines and other materials, including some found nowhere else on Earth," said Haaland, who recently visited the Havasupai Indian Reservation. "It will protect objects of historic and scientific importance for the benefit of tribes, the public and for future generations."

Biden arrived Monday evening at Grand Canyon National Park Airport and was greeted by Democratic congressmen Raúl Grijalva and Ruben Gallego. Biden embraced them when he got off Air Force One, and the trio chatted for a few minutes. Grijalva, who serves on the House Natural Resources Committee, has repeatedly introduced legislation to create the monument.

The president will be speaking in an area that is between Pinyon Plain Mine, which is being developed and has not opened, and Red Butte, a site culturally

significant to the Havasupai and Hopi tribes.

Representatives of various northern Arizona tribes have been invited to attend Biden's remarks. Among them are Yavapai-Apache Nation Chairwoman Tanya Lewis, Colorado River Indian Tribes Chairwoman Amelia Flores, Navajo President Buu Nygren and Havasupai Tribal Councilwoman Dianna Sue White Dove Uqualla. Uqualla is part of a group of tribal dancers who will perform a blessing.

"It's really the uranium we don't want coming out of the ground because it's going to affect everything around us — the trees, the land, the animals, the people," Uqualla said. "It's not going to stop."

The Interior Department, reacting to concerns over the risk of contaminating water, enacted a 20-year moratorium on the filing of new mining claims around the national park in 2012.

Existing mining claims will not be affected by this designation, senior Biden administration officials countered. Furthermore,

the monument site encompasses around 1.3% of the nation's known and understood uranium reserves. Officials say there are significant resources in other parts of the country that will remain accessible.

A U.S. Geological Survey in 2021 found most springs and wells in a vast region of northern Arizona known for its high-grade uranium ore meet federal drinking water standards despite decades of uranium mining. In 2017, Democratic President Barack Obama backed off a full-on monument designation. The idea faced a hostile reception from Arizona's Republican governor and two senators. Then-Gov. Doug Ducey threatened legal action, saying Arizona already has enough national monuments.

Opponents of establishing a monument have argued it won't help combat a lingering drought and could prevent thinning of forests and stop hunters from keeping wildlife populations in check. Ranchers in Utah near the Arizona border say the monument des-

ignation would strip them of privately owned land.

The landscape of Arizona's political delegation has since changed considerably. Gov. Katie Hobbs, Democratic Sen. Mark Kelly and Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, an independent, are all on board. Hobbs, a Democrat, has openly urged Biden to issue a designation. In a letter sent to Biden in May, Hobbs claimed that she heard from people across the political spectrum, including sporting groups and outdoor groups, in support of a monument.

Mining companies and the areas that would benefit from their business remain vehemently opposed. Buster Johnson, a Mohave County supervisor, said the monument proposal feels solely politically driven and there should have been another hearing on the matter. He doesn't see the point of not tapping into uranium and making the country less dependent on Russia.

"We need uranium for the security of our country," Johnson said. "We're out of the game." □



## A judge called an FBI operative a 'villain.' Ruling comes too late for 2 convicted in terror sting



Former pizza shop owner Mohammed Hossain, who was arrested by federal authorities in 2004 as part of a counter-terrorism sting and sentenced to 15 years in jail, talks about his time in prison and the rehabbing work he is doing on his rental property, Monday, July 31, 2023, in Albany, N.Y.

(AP Photo/Hans Pennink)

By Michael Hill

**ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)** — In a scathing ruling last month, a judge said the FBI had used a "villain" of an informant to manipulate a group of Muslim men into going along with a fictitious plot to destroy military planes and synagogues in New York City's suburbs. She ordered three released from prison, saying "the real lead conspirator was the United States." Now, a man convicted in another sting carried out by the same FBI operative says he hopes the ruling will prompt U.S. prosecutors to review the fairness of similar counterterrorism operations carried out in the wake of the 9/11 terror attacks.

"Hopefully this will be the first step for the Justice Department to review all those cases of conspiracy and entrapment," said Yassin Aref, a former imam who spent 14 years in federal custody in a case involving a business loan made to an Albany pizza shop owner and a made-up story about a Stinger missile.

Aref and the shop owner were arrested in 2004 in one of several FBI stings carried out by a paid civilian operative named Shahed Hussain, whose work has been criticized for years by civil liberties groups.

Hussain entered the U.S. with his wife and two sons in the 1990s after he was accused of murder — falsely,

he once testified— in his native Pakistan. He settled in the Albany area and was working as a translator when he got caught helping someone get their driver's license illegally.

In exchange for leniency, he started working for the FBI.

American law enforcement at the time was on a massive hunt for terrorist " sleeper cells" planning attacks on U.S. soil. Hussain worked with the FBI to approach people suspected of being sympathetic to Islamic militant groups and see if they could be talked into an illegal act.

One target was a group of four men from Newburgh, New York, who were arrested in 2009, convicted of plotting deadly antisemitic attacks and sentenced to 25 years in prison.

Courts have upheld their convictions, finding they knowingly became eager participants in a plot to plant explosives at a Bronx synagogue. But when three of the four applied for compassionate release, U.S. District Judge Colleen McMahon granted the request, saying the FBI had sent a master manipulator "to troll among the poorest and weakest of men for 'terrorists' who might prove susceptible to an offer of much-needed cash in exchange for committing a faux crime."

In a ruling July 28, McMahon called them "hapless, easily manipulated and

penurious petty criminals" who had no connection to any terrorist group and had "never remotely contemplated" violent extremism before they met Hussain.

The ruling resonated with defendants and attorneys in a case Hussain helped build in 2004 against two men involved with an Albany mosque, Aref and former pizza shop owner Mohammed Hossain.

Posing as a successful businessman, Hussain befriended Hossain, eventually offering to lend him \$50,000 for his struggling business. But he also told the pizza parlor owner the money would come from the sale of a shoulder-fired missile,

imported from China, to a group that wanted to kill a Pakistani diplomat in New York City.

Hossain later said he thought the talk about an attack was a joke and that the missile he was shown was a plumbing supply. For religious reasons, he asked his imam, Aref, to witness the business transaction, much like a notary.

Aref and Hossain, now free after serving long prison terms for money laundering concealing material support for an attack with a weapon of mass destruction and giving material support to a terrorist organization, say they were innocent. □



Mohammed Hossain, foreground, is escorted out of the Federal Building by a U.S. Federal Marshal, Tuesday, Aug. 24, 2004, in Albany, N.Y. (AP Photo/Jim McKnight, FILE)

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# Powerful storm kills 2 people and leaves 1.1 million without power in eastern US

By Ashraf Khalil and  
Jeffrey Collins

Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — At least two people died, thousands of U.S. flights were canceled or delayed, and more than 1.1 million homes and businesses lost power Monday as severe storms, including hail and lightning, moved through the eastern U.S.

The National Weather Service issued a tornado watch for the greater D.C. area, lasting until 9 p.m. A special Weather Service statement warned, "There is a significant threat for damaging and locally destructive hurricane-force winds, along with the potential for large hail and tornadoes, even strong tornadoes."

The storms' spread was massive, with tornado watches and warnings posted across 10 states from Tennessee to New York. The National Weather Service said more than 29.5 million people were under a tornado watch Monday afternoon.

In Anderson, South Carolina, a 15-year-old boy who arrived at his grandparent's house during the storm was struck and killed when a tree fell on him as he got out of a car, according to the Anderson County Office of the Coroner.

In Florence, Alabama, police said a 28-year-old man



Storm clouds pass over the Washington Monument, Monday, Aug. 7, 2023, in Washington.

(AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)

was struck by lightning and died, WAAY-TV reported. By Monday night, more than 2,600 U.S. flights had been canceled and nearly 7,900 delayed, according to flight tracking service FlightAware. Many cancellations were at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, which was digging out from disruptions caused by Sunday storms. The Federal Aviation Administration said it was rerouting planes around storms heading to the East Coast.

The White House pushed up by 90 minutes President Joe Biden's departure on a four-day trip that's taking

him to Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. The White House also canceled a back-to-school cybersecurity event that was to feature first lady Jill Biden, who is a teacher, Education Secretary Miguel Cardona, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and school administrators, educators and education technology providers from around the country.

The Office of Personnel Management announced Monday that all non-emergency employees would have to depart before 3 p.m., when all federal offices closed.

"This does look to be one of

the most impactful severe weather events across the Mid-Atlantic that we have had in some time," National Weather Service meteorologist Chris Strong said in a Facebook live briefing. The storms prompted federal workers to be sent home early so they wouldn't be in their cars amid wind, hail and tornadoes.

Strong advised residents: "Have yourself in a strong shelter. Be at home or be at work."

The storms postponed a Major League Baseball game between the Phillies and the Washington Nationals in Philadelphia, and in Maryland, the National

Weather Service issued a flash flood warning into Tuesday after 4 inches (10.2 centimeters) of rain fell in a short amount of time.

By early evening, more than 1.1 million customers were without power across Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, West Virginia and Virginia — all states along the storm system's path, according to poweroutage.us. The Knoxville Utilities Board tweeted that the damage across its service area in Tennessee was "widespread and extensive" and will likely take several days to repair.

Trees and power lines were toppled in multiple states, falling into roads and some homes, news outlets reported.

A row of utility poles was toppled in Westminster, Maryland, WJLA-TV reported.

In Hockessin, Delaware, at least one residence had the roof ripped off, 6ABC-TV reported.

"We saw the clouds coming and could hear a rumbling in the distance," said Tom Tomovich, whose home was damaged. "We went into the house and we were on the first floor, and before we could blink an eye the winds just came right through the back of our house." □

## Woman critically injured by rare shark bite off NYC's Rockaway Beach



People enjoy the water at Rockaway Beach, Tuesday, July 19, 2022, in the Queens borough of New York.

(AP Photo/Frank Franklin II, File)

Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — A woman was critically injured when a shark bit her on the leg while she was swimming at a New York City beach, officials said. The 50-year-old woman was swimming off Rockaway Beach just before 6 p.m. Monday when a shark bit her on the left leg, the city parks department said in a statement. Lifeguards pulled the woman from the water and administered first aid. The woman was taken to Jamaica Hospital in critical but sta-

ble condition with severe lacerations to her thigh, a police spokesperson said. Lifeguards cleared all swimmers from the water, and the police used a helicopter to search the area for sharks but did not find any, the parks department said. Rockaway Beach was closed to swimming and surfing on Tuesday as a precaution. Experts say shark bites are extremely rare, with only 57 unprovoked bites last year, according to the University of Florida's International Shark Attack

File. The shark bite occurred amid a rise in shark sightings at New York City and Long Island beaches due to factors including improved water quality and thriving populations of the bunker fish that sharks feed on.

Monday's shark bite at Rockaway Beach was the first reported in recent memory, the parks department said. There have been at least five instances of sharks biting swimmers and surfers at Long Island beaches this summer. There have been no fatalities. □



## Ukraine accuses Russia of targeting rescue workers with consecutive missile strikes

By Hanna Arhirova  
Associated Press

**KYIV, Ukraine (AP)** — Ukrainian officials on Tuesday accused the Kremlin's forces of targeting rescue workers by hitting residential buildings with two consecutive missiles — the first one to draw crews to the scene and the second one to wound or kill them.

The strikes Monday evening in the downtown district of the city of Pokrovsk killed at least seven people, including an emergency official, and wounded more than 80 others, most of them police officers, emergency workers and soldiers who rushed to assist residents, Ukrainian officials said.

The Russian missiles slammed into the center of Pokrovsk in the eastern Donetsk region, which is partially occupied by Russia. Emergency crews were still removing rubble on Tuesday. The Iskander missiles, which have an advanced guidance system that increases their accuracy, hit within 40 minutes



**In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, people carry a wounded person from a damaged building after Russian missile strikes in Pokrovsk, Donetsk region, Ukraine, Monday, Aug. 7, 2023.**

(Ukrainian Emergency Service via AP Photo)

of each other, according to Donetsk Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko said.

Since the start of the war, Russia has used artillery and missiles to hit targets and then struck the exact same spot around 30 minutes

later, often hitting emergency teams responding to the first blast. The tactic is called a "double tap" in military jargon. Russians used the same method in Syria's civil war.

"All of (the police) were

there because they were needed, putting their efforts into rescuing people after the first strike," Ivan Vyhivskyi, chief of Ukraine's National Police, said Tuesday. "They knew that under the rubble were the injured

— they needed to react, to dig, to retrieve, to save. And the enemy deliberately struck the second time." Russia's Ministry of Defense claimed it hit a Ukrainian army command post in Pokrovsk. Neither side's claims could be independently verified.

Arriving at the scene after the first missile strike, Nikulin was wounded in the second strike when shrapnel pierced his left lung and left hand.

"Today is not my happy day because Russian criminals committed another awful crime in Pokrovsk," he said in a video he sent to The Associated Press from a hospital ward.

In the video, he is seen lying on a bed shirtless, with dried blood on his side and covering his left hand. He moves with pain to show his wounds.

Pointing his camera to show other wounded security forces in the ward, he says: "Look, these are Ukrainian heroes who helped (injured) people." □

## Germany receives 178 compensation applications from gay servicepeople over discrimination



**Soldiers of the honor guard prepare for a military welcome ceremony as part of a meeting of German Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen and her counterpart from Great Britain Michael Fallon, in Berlin, Germany, Tuesday, Aug. 12, 2014.**

(AP Photo/Michael Sohn, File)

By Kirsten Grieshaber  
Associated Press

**BERLIN (AP)** — The German defense ministry said Tuesday that it has received 178 applications for compensation from gay servicepeople who experienced discrimination in the military in the past. The ministry said

in a statement that it had expected more applications, but that nonetheless "the goals of the law were achieved." A law rehabilitating gay soldiers who suffered discrimination came into force two years ago, and so far, about 400,000 euros (\$438,000) has been

paid in symbolic compensation, the ministry said.

The law was passed in 2021 after a study commissioned by the defense ministry and presented in 2020 documented "systematic discrimination" in the Bundeswehr — the military of West Germany and since 1990 of reunited Germany — from 1955 until the beginning of the 21st century.

While the German military stopped its policy of discrimination against gay soldiers in 2000, it took more than two decades to pass the law offering them compensation.

The law also offers compensation for gay soldiers who served in East Germany's National People's Army until Germany's unification in 1990. The defense minister apologized for the discrimination against gay

soldiers in the Bundeswehr at the time the study was presented.

The study found that "same-sex orientation was viewed as a security risk in the Bundeswehr until the turn of the millennium and made a career as an officer or noncommissioned officer impossible."

In the past, soldiers were punished by military courts for consensual gay sex, dismissed, denied promotion or stripped of responsibility. In its report on Tuesday, the defense ministry wrote that "the reconciliation of the affected soldiers with the Bundeswehr cannot be measured solely by the number of successful rehabilitation proceedings and the associated payments." It stressed that in addition, "individual, appreciative communication and comradesly attention are also

just as much a part of this as the explicit admission by the Bundeswehr that injustice was done to those affected at the time."

In recent years, Germany has tried to address past anti-gay discrimination in different ways. In 2017, parliament voted to annul the convictions of thousands of gay men under a law criminalizing male homosexuality that was enforced zealously in post-World War II West Germany.

Legislation criminalizing male homosexuality was introduced in the 19th century, toughened under Nazi rule and retained in that form by democratic West Germany, which convicted about 50,000 men between 1949 and 1969. Homosexuality was decriminalized in 1969 but the legislation wasn't taken off the books entirely until 1994. □



# The World Food Program slowly resumes food aid to Ethiopia after months of suspension and criticism

By Cara Anna

**NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)** — The United Nations World Food Program is slowly resuming food aid to Ethiopia nearly five months after taking the extraordinary measure of suspending aid to millions of people after the discovery of a massive scheme to steal donated grain. WFP said it's testing small-scale distribution in some areas but acknowledges that the government still plays a role in the process.

Critics of the aid suspension, including aid groups and health workers, have called it immoral and alleged that hundreds of people have died of hunger. The United States, however, says its own suspension of food aid to the East African country will continue while it negotiates with Ethiopia's government for reforms of a system long controlled by local authorities.

The pause has affected 20 million Ethiopians — 1/6 of the population — plus 800,000 refugees.

In a written response Monday evening to questions, the WFP told The Associated Press that the agency has started distributing wheat to around 100,000 people in four districts of Ethiopia's northern Tigray region on July 31 as it tests "enhanced controls and



An Ethiopian woman scoops up portions of wheat to be allocated to each waiting family after it was distributed by the Relief Society of Tigray in the town of Agula, in the Tigray region of northern Ethiopia on May 8, 2021.

(AP Photo/Ben Curtis, File)

measures for delivering food assistance." Tigray is recovering from a two-year conflict with Ethiopian forces that ended in November.

The WFP's new measures include digitally registering beneficiaries, adding markings to grain sacks, feedback hotlines and more training for aid partners. The agency hopes to roll out its new distribution system to other parts of Ethiopia as soon as possible, WFP said, adding that it's confident the measures will help to

ensure food reaches the people who need it most. The WFP first halted food deliveries to Tigray in March after discovering the theft of grain. In a single Tigray town, enough stolen food aid to feed 134,000 people for a month was found instead for sale in markets, still marked with the U.S. flag.

The suspension was extended to all of Ethiopia in June. The U.S., the largest humanitarian donor to both Ethiopia and WFP, also paused food aid.

U.S. officials have said they believe the theft could be the largest-ever diversion of donated food. Aid workers have told the AP that Ethiopian officials were deeply involved. Ethiopia's government dismissed as harmful propaganda the suggestion that it bears primary responsibility and agreed to a joint investigation.

Donors have recommended completely removing Ethiopia's government from the aid system. But "WFP works in Ethiopia at the request of the government

and works closely with the government of Ethiopia at all levels," the U.N. agency said.

The U.S. Agency for International Development told the AP in a written response to questions that the resumption of WFP aid is not funded by the U.S., which continues its suspension. It noted the WFP program is funded by the World Bank.

"We are committed to resuming food assistance as quickly as possible once we can be confident our assistance is reaching the most vulnerable that it is intended for," USAID said, adding that Secretary of State Antony Blinken has spoken with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to "drive progress on these issues."

Some humanitarian groups and Ethiopian religious leaders have joined the calls to resume food aid distribution as soon as possible. "People are starving to death. In recent weeks, hunger has killed hundreds of people in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region as result of food shortage. This is neither humane nor moral," Caritas Internationalis Secretary General Alistair Dutton said in a statement in July.

The U.S. has told the AP it was horrified by reports of hunger. □

# The monthslong conflict in Sudan has displaced over 4 million people, a UN official says



Smoke rises over Khartoum, Sudan, on June 8, 2023, as fighting between the Sudanese army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces continues.

(AP Photo, File)

By Jack Jeffery  
Associated Press  
CAIRO (AP) — Sudan's es-

calating conflict has driven more than 4 million people from their homes, including

over 884,000 who have fled to neighboring countries, a U.N. official said Tuesday. The fighting has also triggered outbreaks of disease and an increase in malnutrition, according to William Spindler, a spokesperson for the U.N. refugee agency. From mid-May to mid-July, the UNHCR recorded over 300 deaths from measles and malnutrition, mainly among children under 5, Spindler said, speaking to reporters in Geneva.

His remarks came as clashes between the Sudanese army and its rival paramili-

tary force intensify in the eastern part of the capital, Khartoum, and the nearby city of Omdurman.

Sudan was plunged into chaos in April when simmering tensions between the military, led by Abdel Fattah Burhan, and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, commanded by Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, exploded into open fighting in Khartoum and elsewhere.

"Chronic shortages in health staff, as well as attacks on personnel as reported by the World Health

Organization, have significantly compromised the quality of health care across the country," Spindler said.

On Tuesday, Nabil Abdallah, the military's main spokesman, said army forces killed and injured hundreds of RSF fighters in ongoing operations in Omdurman. The RSF did not acknowledge those casualties and instead said its fighters had killed scores of army soldiers in street battles there. The Associated Press could not verify either claim. □



# National Park Arikok: Aruba's biggest nature conservation

**The National Park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There are numerous animals to discover, for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches.**

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches—a very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

## Nature Conservation

The protected area of National Park Arikok was officially established in 2000. Arikok National Park is a 34 square kilometers (7907 acres) of natural area, located at the north-eastern part of Aruba which contains examples of most of the island's flora and fauna against a backdrop of great geological complexity. We are proud to state that approximately 18% of the total land area of Aruba is assigned as a National Park, to protect and preserve the flora, fauna, geology and historical remains present within Arikok

National Park.

## The Landscape

There is a great geological variety within the park. The main aspects are the rough hills of the volcanic Aruba lava formation, the mysterious rocks of the batholithic quartz-diorite/tonalite, and the limestone rocks from fossilized coral. The two tallest hills on the island are situated within the park. Jamanota hill 188 meters (617 ft) and Arikok hill 176 meters (577 ft), from which the name of the park is derived.

The line of the permanently wind-and-wave beaten North Coast is broken by several bays (boca's). Most of them are small yet impressive inlets at the mouth of dry riverbeds. Some of these bays (boca's) are spectacular sights, adorned with white, sandy beaches and sand dunes, as is the case at Boca Prins and Dos Playa.

Arikok is also home to Conchi, Aruba's most important natural attraction; also known as The Natural Pool. The journey to the Pool is an adventure by itself and only possible by foot, horse, ATV or 4x4 vehicle.

## Cultural and Historical components

There are a number of sites within the park that attest to the history of Aruba. The



Caquetío Indians left rock paintings in Cunucu Arikok and Fontein Cave. The bird drawing in the park logo is a copy of one of these historical artistic expressions.

Old plantation (Cunucus) sites tell the story of an active yet challenging agricultural past.

These Cunucus were also residential areas for the few families that worked the land. These families found ways to survive in the difficult conditions, and were able to erect their homes with materials found in the area. Two of these adobe houses have been restored. Park rangers are learning many of the old building techniques in order to preserve this unique Aruban mud-house. At Cunucu Arikok and near Plantation Prins you can find



these adobe houses.

## Park Management

For the management of the park, a dedicated foundation "Fundacion Parke Nacional Arikok" (FPNA), known today as the Aruba National Park Foundation was established in July 2003. In Feb-

ruary 2017, mangrove and wetland RAMSAR site #198 Spanish Lagoon was annexed to Arikok National Park due to its importance as a feeding and breeding area for water birds and as a nursery area for a variety of marine organisms. With this addition, the areas under FPNA management increased by 70 hectares while the amount of species of flora and fauna to be conserved to over 250. On December 21st, 2018 (AB 2018 no. 77) Parke Marino Aruba – currently consisting of four marine protected areas (MPAs) – was officially established and subsequently brought under management of FPNA. In 2019 management plans will be established for the new MPAs which include: coral reefs, sea grass beds, mangrove systems, a large diversity of breeding seabirds. Parke Marino Aruba also contains potential shark nursery areas, endangered sea turtle nesting beaches and marine mammal nursery areas. □





## Po-kè Ono - A Taste of Asia with a Twist: Exploring Flavorful Fusion



Amidst the vibrant paradise of Aruba, where turquoise waters meet golden sands, a culinary gem awaits: Po-kè Ono, the coolest Asian fusion spot that will whisk you away on an exotic flavor adventure. Experience an explosion of Asian tastes like never before led by the creative genius of Chef Urvin Croes, the mastermind behind Aruba's acclaimed Infini restaurant. Po-kè Ono serves up an enticing menu that blends traditional Asian flavors with modern twists, all within a cheery ambiance that exudes warmth and tropical charm.

At Po-kè Ono, diners can savor an array of flavors from the new menu items that stand out for their artful presentation and delectable taste. One of the highlights is the traditional Vietnamese Pho, a soul-soothing soup consisting of bone broth, rice noodles, succulent thinly sliced meat, fresh herbs, and zesty spices, making it an explosion of taste in every spoonful.

Another must-try dish is The Elvis Presley Bao, a playful homage to the King of Rock 'n' Roll. This fun creation features fried spam with sweet teriyaki, peanut sauce,

crispy fried plantains, crisp lettuce, red onions, and a spicy kick from the Kewpie mayo. The combination of sweet, savory, and spicy flavors is a harmony that leaves guests coming back for more.

If you're craving a delicious fusion of Indonesian and Hawaiian influences, the Babi Sate Poke hits all the right notes. Indonesian-style pork skewers are served with rich peanut sauce, crunchy crispy onions, pickled cucumber, and creamy avocado, resulting in a medley of textures and flavors that captivate the palate.

Beyond the flavors, Po-kè Ono impresses with its thoughtfully curated ambiance that reflects the Asian fusion theme. With two locations in Renaissance Marketplace and the lobby of Azure Residence, the restaurant exudes a tropical and laid-back vibe, inviting guests to unwind and indulge in a delightful dining experience. The use of fun cocktail glasses and relaxed decor further enhances the sense of pleasure, making every visit a memorable one.

Get ready for double the fun at Po-kè Ono with their awesome two-for-one happy hour. From 4 pm to 6 pm, this fantastic deal lets you dive into selected items at an incredible value. It's the perfect opportunity to try out their fresh new menu while sipping on delightful beverages.

Meet the culinary maestro, Chef Urvin Croes, the creative force behind Po-kè Ono and Infini. With an unyielding passion for Asian cuisine, rooted in his Chinese heritage, he sprinkles his magic on every plate at Po-kè Ono, crafting innovative and artfully delicious dishes. Having honed his skills in top-notch hotel restaurants and even snatching the title of 'Iron Chef Aruba's first winner,' Chef Urvin's culinary expertise shines through in every mouthwatering bite.

Promoting Aruba as a culinary destination, Chef Urvin sources ingredients locally whenever possible, supporting farmers who share his passion for qual-



ity produce. The result is a menu that expertly balances traditional recipes with modern techniques, elevating every dish to new heights. His love for food and the cultural stories behind each creation are evident in the passionate manner in which he prepares and presents his dishes.

Notably, Po-kè Ono has earned its well-deserved reputation as the number one restaurant on Tripadvisor Palm Beach, a testament to its success and popularity among locals and tourists alike.

Po-kè Ono is like a treasure trove of Asian fusion delights, all crafted with love and expertise by the one and only Chef Urvin Croes. You'll be treated to an array of dishes, from Pho to inventive Bao creations, each artfully presented. The relaxed ambiance and awesome two-for-one happy hour make dining here an absolute pleasure. Once you've tasted the magic of Po-kè Ono, you'll be coming back for more!

So, what are you waiting for? Dive in and indulge in this captivating world of Asian-inspired goodness! □

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View menu





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## Why You Should Not Miss Aruba's Free City Center Street Car Tour

**ORANJESTAD - Aruba's City Center Street Car - or as we call it in Dutch; "Tram van Oranjestad" - is a single track tram line in Oranjestad, the capital city of Aruba. It was inaugurated on 22 December 2012, being the first and so far the only passenger rail service on Aruba and the rest of the Dutch Caribbean. There are two trolleys, a single-deck one with 42 seats and a double-decker with 64 seats. The line was inspired by the popular battery-powered streetcar operation at the Grove in Los Angeles, USA. Aruba's streetcars are powered by hydrogen fuel cells, which are charged by the island's year-round trade winds.**

mall, retail shops, and a variety of local and international cuisine restaurants. The "I love Aruba" trademark also belongs to that list. The third stop on the route is close to a 5-minute walk to the famous Renaissance Marina showcasing luxurious yachts and Aruba's blue waters.

The "Tram van Oranjestad" starts from a balloon loop near the Port of Call and serves the downtown area and ends at Plaza Nicky. The first ride starts at 10:00 am sharp with intervals of 25minutes. The last trolley departs from the cruise port at 5:00pm. Don't miss this tour of the beautiful Aruba's City Center- it is free for all! ☐



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Caya Betico Croes, mostly referred to as our "main street" has been developed into a pollution-free pedestrian mall. The double-decker offers you a 360 degree view of the down town area with a picture perfect scenery of the island's clear blue skies. Who would not enjoy a ride on this beautiful and naturally air-conditioned vehicle? The tour consists of a total of 9 stops approximately 200 meters apart from each other; all stops are clearly marked. The tram will bring you close to different museums, historical plazas, monuments, the Protestant church, Aruba's high- end





Article by Etnia Nativa

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## The Church of Oranjestad

Episode CCXVI - 218

Every week, Etnia Nativa writes a new episode concerning culture and heritage, focusing on various aspects of native knowledge, transcendental wisdom, and the importance of upholding cultural identity. This segment shares how the construction of the San Francisco Church in Oranjestad took place, which is now known as the Pro-Cathedral San Francisco.

It was in April of 1863 that a priest of the Capuchin order named J.A. te Riele, whose name, due to its pronunciation in the Papiamentu language and deeds, resulted in "Father Terrible" built the first San Francisco Church in Oranjestad. This construction included an altar and a sacristy, which were erected in the style of cruciform church architecture. As it was a relevant event in its time, the first stone was laid by lieutenant-governor van den Bossche, who authorized the use of stones from a wall in ruins that surrounded a government plantation that was a few meters away from the chosen place for the new church construction.

Parishioners gathered while one or many helped carry stones to the construction site. With everyone's collaboration, the construction of the church advanced rapidly. Father Terrible had intended to consecrate the church on Saint Francis Day in October, in honor of the saint, but the day of the consecration ended in a real disaster. During the consecration day, the bad weather began with intense rain accompanied by strong winds that caused the fall of one of the stone walls of the new construction.

Presumably, in order to finish the work in October, it was sped up too much. It is quite possible that the manposterie did not dry enough to soften the masonry, which could not support the heavy roof load. Only the north wall, the little tower, and the sanctuary remained standing. However, the church very soon stood erect again. In respect to the building of churches, Arubans always showed dauntless courage and fearless energy.

During the following months, Father Terrible had to travel to the Netherlands to attend to his health. During his absence, the parish priest of Santa Cruz had to officiate in the three existing churches: the church of Noord, the other in Santa Cruz, and the one of Playa (Oranjestad), so generally Noord remained without



Holy Mass.

A shortage of parish priests at the time in Aruba attracted Dominican parish priests, who arrived in 1886. It was during this time in May that the Dominican order conducted the solemn consecration of the church of San Francisco.

Upon his return to the island and due to the lack of parish priests, Father Terrible wanted to initiate missionary activities among the natives of the Venezuelan coast, especially those of the Paraguaná Peninsula, affirming that many Arubans lived there for whom Papiamentu was not an unknown language. The fact that it used to be one country under the Caquetio native reign kept a continuous exchange that existed from coast to coast, but the diocese of Curacao disapproved of his intentions after a few months of work on the continent.

In 1917, the original construction of the Church of San Francisco in Oranjestad was demolished, but until years later, the construction next to it, which included the old parish house, would continue in use. While the reconstruction of the Church as we currently know it came to be in 1919, which, like the Church of Santa Ana in Noord, to

which we refer before and in our episode 87, was designed by the parish priest Stephanus van de Pavert O.P.

At the beginning of the 19th century, Protestant and a few Jewish families were among those who came from Curacao and abroad to settle in Oranjestad; in most cases, they were merchants who years later would get their own temples. From that time on, Protestantism had preponderance in Oranjestad.□

If you are keen to explore Aruba's deep heritage, Etnia Nativa happens to be the place of choice in its category, where you will be in the hands of a first-hand connoisseur, an owner descendant of old Aruban families, native Aruba pre-Colombian settlers, and other selected families. Etnia Nativa distinguishes itself from the rest as a hidden gem by offering a unique personal native touch that adds depth and authenticity to your destination experience with a deeper understanding of Aruba's heritage.

A personal experience requires an appointment: [etnianativa03@gmail.com](mailto:etnianativa03@gmail.com) or WhatsApp (messages only) at +297 592 2702.





## History of fishing in Aruba

**ORANJESTAD — Fishing has been a family tradition for ages in Aruba. Our ancestors used to fish for a living. Even though nowadays you don't see them often we still have some passionate fishermen on the island that go out every day in search for fish to feed their families and serve our local market. One of these fisherman is Gregory Wernet.**

The so-called Continental Bank between Aruba and the opposite coast reaches a depth of about 650 feet. The sea is very rich in fish here. Since the time of the indigenous native people fish and other sea creatures such as turtles, octopus squids, conch and many type of crustaceans have formed a means of subsistence for the native Aruban inhabitants. Especially along the west coast of the island where the fishing grounds are settlements of fishermen. Until the arrival of the oil industry Aruban fishermen could supply Aruba's wants.

As a source of income, however, fishing did not amount too much. In the beginning of the 1900's approximately 160 people earn their living in this branch of this industry. Rancho, which stands for a shed, nowadays east Oranjestad, was the head

quarter and remains the fishermen's settlement. Savaneta, Noord, Santa Cruz all had their fishermen's villages. At a rough estimate there were about a hundred small fishing boats during that time.

The Arubans were mainly engaged in coastal fishing, using rowing-boats or small sailing-boats, and lines or dragnets and canisters in shallow water. When fishing with deep-sea lines just over the bottom of the sea the boat is kept in place by means of a piece of rock serving as an anchor. The two most important species of fish by far caught in this manner are the pargo or red snappers and a variety of groupers like the mero, jeanpao and the wowo di boyo.

Cruising off the coast the Aruban fisherman patiently waits for a fish willing to snap at the bait on the drag-line, in nets and traps. Veritable giants are sometimes caught. Barracudas weigh from 9 to 44 pounds and measure from 3 to almost 7 feet. The king-fish has a weight from 22 to 44 pounds; the moclat may tip the scales at 155, whilst garfish, having a length of nine feet, weigh over 132 pounds.

Most fish caught is used for their own consumption,



to feed their families and some are being sold in the market to local restaurants. Fisherman Gregory Wernet is a well-known fisherman from Santa Cruz. His father taught him fishing when he was a small child. Gregory has two sons, Jordan and Jordanny, which he taught fishing too, when they were only 3 years old and he takes them fishing with him. Fishing has been a family tradition for quite a long time and even his grandson Willvion of 7 years old is following his grandfather steps. This is the sixth generation of fishermen in their family.

They go deep sea fishing. There they catch red snap-

per, grouper and amberjack. They usually fish for 15 hours a day, but now due to the covid-19 measurements they go fishing from 5 in the morning until 8 o'clock at night or even sometimes from 8 at night till 5 in the morning. The day before they prepare all their fishing tools such as the Lines, lures, spears, and load their boat with fishing reels, batteries, fill the gasoline tank, lights and some food and beverages. For bait he uses sardines, squid and the small fish known in Aruba as piskechi. They have two boats they use for fishing. 'Virgen del Valle' which is parked at the pier by the Seaport and 'Padrot' which they have

at home.

The fish they catch they take home to their families and they also sell it to their clients. Gregory is proud to be a fisherman. It is a honest and humble job but with it he is able to feed his family even during hard times. It is a very dangerous job and you have to spend many hours on the sea, waiting patiently and risking your life while fighting a big fish and big waves but the adrenaline it brings with it but also just sitting there listening to the sound of the waves and enjoying the marvelous view that nature has to offer is all worth it. □

Source: Etnia Nativa





# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 38 Namely
  - 1 Skimpy swimwear
  - 6 Forum wear
  - 10 Went fast
  - 11 Roof overhangs
  - 12 Epps and Sharif
  - 13 Enormous
  - 14 Flag waver
  - 15 "Gangsta's Paradise" singer
  - 16 Greek vowel
  - 17 Fitting
  - 18 Church talk: Abbr.
  - 19 Hip-hop star who sounds absurd
  - 22 Duo
  - 23 Revue segment
  - 26 Hip-hop star who sounds para-normal
  - 29 Sauna site
  - 32 — Vegas
  - 33 "Straight Outta Compton" hip-hop group
  - 34 "The Naked Truth" rapper
  - 36 Eye part
  - 37 Prank

V	A	L	O	R		R	A	G	A	S
I	R	E	N	E		E	D	I	T	H
S	U	P	A	D	U	P	A	F	L	Y
A	B	E		O	R	E		T	A	N
S	A	W	M	I	L	L		T	R	E
			I	N	S		B	A	G	S
G	O	I	N	G		R	A	G	E	S
O	N	C	E		M	A	N			
O	L	E		T	I	E	G	A	M	E
D	E	F		E	L	K		C	I	I
D	A	R	E	A	L	W	O	R	L	D
O	V	E	N	S		O	V	I	N	E
G	E	E	S	E		N	A	D	E	R

## Yesterday's answer

- DOWN**
- 1 Mason's tool
  - 2 Overact
  - 3 Ottawa anthem
  - 4 Bookish sort
  - 5 Merchandise: Abbr.
  - 6 Singer Cruz
  - 7 Squashed circles
  - 8 Wish granter
  - 9 Famed fur tycoon
  - 11 They have big heads
  - 15 EMT's forte
  - 17 Fast-drying paints
  - 20 Goal
  - 21 Go downhill
  - 24 "Told you!"
  - 25 More yellow-brown
  - 27 Frodo's friend
  - 28 In conclusion
  - 29 URL part
  - 30 Ship of 1492
  - 31 Church sight
  - 35 Toy with a tail
  - 36 Folk stories
  - 38 Paving goo

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10					11			
12					13			
14				15				
16			17			18		
19		20			21			
22				23	24	25		
26			27				28	
29	30	31		32			33	
34			35			36		
37					38			
39					40			
41					42			

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three I's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

8-9 CRYPTOQUOTE  
SPVIV HK N ZYGVIOED OYIMV

EBDVNKPVC GPVB XYEBQ

ZVYZDV IVKYDWV SY TNLV N

MPNBQV. — ANBV QYYCND D  
Yesterday's Cryptoquote: MY FATHER RAISED US TO STEP TOWARD TROUBLE RATHER THAN TO STEP AWAY FROM IT. — JUSTIN TRUDEAU

# Dungeons & Dragons tells illustrators to stop using AI to generate artwork for fantasy franchise

By Matt O'Brien

Associated Press

(AP) - The Dungeons & Dragons role-playing game franchise says it won't allow artists to use artificial intelligence technology to draw its cast of sorcerers, druids and other characters and scenery.

D&D art is supposed to be fanciful. But at least one ax-wielding giant seemed too weird for some fans, leading them to take to social media to question if it was human-made.

Hasbro-owned D&D Beyond, which makes online tools and other companion content for the franchise, said it didn't know until Saturday that an illustrator it has worked with for nearly a decade used AI to create commissioned artwork for an upcoming book. The franchise, run by the Hasbro subsidiary Wizards of the Coast, said in a statement that it has talked to that artist and is clarifying its rules. "He will not use AI for Wizards' work moving forward," said a post from D&D Beyond's account on X, formerly Twitter. "We are revising our process and updating our artist guidelines to make clear that artists must refrain from using AI art generation as part of their art creation process for developing D&D."

Today's AI-generated art often shows telltale glitches, such as distorted limbs, which is what caught the eye of skeptical D&D fans. Hasbro and Wizards of the Coast didn't respond to requests for further comment Sunday. Hasbro bought D&D Beyond for \$146.3 million last year. The Rhode

Island-based toy giant has owned Wizards of the Coast for more than two decades. The art in ques-

tion is in a soon-to-be-released hardcover book of monster descriptions and lore called "Bigby Presents: Glory of the Giants." The digital and physical version of the package is selling for \$59.95 on the D&D website and due for an Aug. 15 release. □

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# Mourners in Ireland pay their respects to singer Sinéad O'Connor at funeral procession

**Associated Press**

**LONDON (AP)** — Throngs of fans lined the streets of Sinéad O'Connor's former hometown in Ireland to bid farewell to the gifted singer as her funeral procession passed by Tuesday following a private memorial service.

A vintage VW camper van with rooftop speakers blasting Bob Marley's song "Natural Mystic" led a hearse at walking pace through a thick crowd of admirers along the waterfront in Bray. O'Connor said she loved Marley's music.

Devotees of O'Connor's singing and those touched by her sometimes-troubled life tossed roses and other flowers on the hearse.

A group that had been waiting for well over an hour outside O'Connor's former home, singing her songs at times, began to clap as four police officers on motorcycles leading the cortege approached and the procession came to a halt. They snapped photos through the windows of the hearse where her coffin was dwarfed by a pile of blue hydrangeas and pink roses.

Ruth O'Shea, who had come to the coastal town of Bray south of Dublin with her two daughters, became teary as she spoke



Fans of Sinéad O'Connor line the street as her funeral cortege passes through her former hometown of Bray, Co Wicklow, Ireland, Tuesday, Aug. 8, 2023.

(Liam McBurney/PA via AP)

of O'Connor's significance, saying she had "meant the world" to her.

"She was so rebellious and empowering and inspiring, and my mother hated me listening to her music," O'Shea said. "She was just brilliant. Brilliant — I loved her, and then the kids, I suppose by osmosis because I played her when they were both growing up, they'd go, 'Oh God, mom's listening to Sinéad O'Connor, she's obviously had a rough day.' She just gave me hope. And I just

loved her, I loved her."

O'Connor, 56, was found unresponsive at her London home on July 26. Police have not shared a cause of death, though they said her death was not suspicious.

O'Connor's family had invited the public to pay their respects during the funeral procession.

"Sinéad loved living in Bray and the people in it," her family said in a statement. "With this procession, her family would like to acknowledge the outpour-

ing of love for her from the people of Wicklow (county) and beyond, since she left ... to go to another place." Fans tucked handwritten notes and flowers behind a chain wrapped around a granite post at the entrance to her former home, thanking her for sharing her voice and her music. One sign listed causes that the singer had expressed support for, including welcoming refugees.

"Thanks for your short special life," one note read. "Gone too soon."

O'Connor, a multi-octave mezzo soprano of extraordinary emotional range who was recognizable by her shaved head, began her career singing on the streets of Dublin and soon rose to international fame. She became a sensation in 1990 with her cover of Prince's ballad "Nothing Compares 2 U," which topped charts from Europe to Australia.

She was a critic of the Roman Catholic Church well before allegations of sexual abuse were widely reported. She made headlines in October 1992 when she tore up a photo of Pope John Paul II while appearing on NBC's "Saturday Night Live" and denounced the church as the enemy.

She was public about her struggles with mental illness. When her teenage son Shane died by suicide last year, O'Connor tweeted there was "no point living without him" and she was soon hospitalized. Her final tweet, sent July 17, read "For all mothers of Suicided children," and linked to a Tibetan compassion mantra.

Since her death, celebrities have paid tribute to her, and ordinary people have shared acts of kindness she performed. □



This combo of file images shows Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg, left, and Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk. (AP Photo/Manu Fernandez, Stephan Savoia, File)

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Elon Musk says his potential in-person fight with Mark Zuckerberg would be streamed on his social media site X, formerly known as Twitter.

The two tech billionaires seemingly agreed to a "cage match" face-off in late June. Zuckerberg is actually trained in mixed martial arts, and the CEO

## Musk says his cage fight with Zuckerberg will be streamed on X

of Facebook's parent company Meta posted about completing his first jiu jitsu tournament earlier this year.

"Zuck v Musk fight will be live-streamed on X," Musk wrote in a post Sunday on the platform. "All proceeds will go to charity for veterans."

Musk said earlier Sunday he was training for the fight by lifting weights.

"Don't have time to work out, so I just bring them to work," Musk wrote. Zuckerberg replied on Threads: "I'm ready today. I suggested Aug 26 when

he first challenged, but he hasn't confirmed. Not holding my breath. I love this sport and will continue competing with people who train no matter what happens here." Whether or not Musk and Zuckerberg actually make it to the ring in Las Vegas has yet to be seen — especially as Musk often tweets about action prematurely or without following through. But even if their cage match agreement is all a joke, the banter has gained attention. It all started when Musk, who owns X, responded to

a tweet about Meta preparing to release a new Twitter rival called Threads. He took a dig about the world becoming "exclusively under Zuck's thumb with no other options" — but then one Twitter user jokingly warned Musk of Zuckerberg's jiu jitsu training.

"I'm up for a cage match if he is lol," Musk wrote. Representatives of X, Meta and Ultimate Fighting Championship, which owns the venue where the fight might take place, didn't immediately respond to emails seeking comment. □



## USA Basketball rolls past Puerto Rico in World Cup tune-up opener, 117-74

By Tim Reynolds  
Associated Press

**LAS VEGAS (AP)** — For an opening statement, USA Basketball's World Cup team made an emphatic one. Anthony Edwards and Cam Johnson each scored 15 points, and the U.S. used a 20-0 run in the second half on the way to rolling past Puerto Rico 117-74 on Monday night in the first World Cup tune-up for the Americans.

Mikal Bridges scored 14 for the U.S., which finished with seven players in double figures and outscored Puerto Rico 67-31 in the second half. "A great night for us. ... I think the guys have really picked up what we're trying to install at both ends," U.S. coach Steve Kerr said. Jaren Jackson Jr. scored 12, Jalen Brunson scored 11 points and grabbed 12 rebounds, and Bobby Portis and Brandon Ingram each scored 11 for the Americans. Tyrese Haliburton finished with 12 assists for the U.S., which held some huge stat edges — 53-27 in rebounding, 31-9 in points off turnovers, 10-2 in blocked shots and shot 56% compared to Puerto Rico's 37%. "It's just us playing together," Brunson said. "We're still getting to know each other, but everyone's really



United States' Jaren Jackson Jr. dunks against Puerto Rico during the first half of an exhibition basketball game Monday, Aug. 7, 2023, in Las Vegas.

putting egos aside just to win and we've got a lot of high-character guys. That's the No. 1 priority for every single one of them." Tremont Waters scored 17 for Puerto Rico, which got 12 from George Condit IV and 10 from Jordan Howard. There were spectacular moments, there were sloppy moments, there were botched plays and big-time plays. And in the end, the team with far more talent pulled away. In other words, it went ex-

actly as expected.

"I think our whole thing is, if we stay solid and really play without turning it over, without fouling, guard the 3-point line and really do a good job on the glass, then we feel like over 40 minutes we can wear people down," Kerr said. Paolo Banchero pretty much blocked a shot with his elbow, Edwards' head nearly hit the backboard on a dunk, Austin Reaves got cheers the moment he checked in — after all,

Las Vegas is a Lakers' town — and those yells only got louder when he made a jumper just seconds into his first stint with USA across his chest.

"We're figuring it out," Edwards said. It was the first of five exhibitions before the World Cup for the Americans, and the only one that will be played in the U.S. The team flies to Malaga, Spain on Tuesday for games this weekend against Slovenia and Spain, then heads to the United

Arab Emirates for games in Abu Dhabi against Greece (Aug. 18) and Germany (Aug. 20).

From there, it's on to Manila. The World Cup will be held in the Philippines, Japan and Indonesia; the U.S. will be in Manila for the entirety of the tournament, and opens against New Zealand on Aug. 26, followed by Greece on Aug. 28 and Jordan on Aug. 30. The Americans are tuning up for a World Cup that, they hope, avenges the disappointment of four years ago. The U.S. was seventh at the World Cup in China in 2019, the worst finish for any American men's team in a major international tournament.

The game turned into a run-away in the third when the Americans outscored Puerto Rico 34-18, turning what was a seven-point halftime lead into a 23-point edge going into the fourth. The big run sparked that; what was a 74-61 game late in the third became a 94-61 game early in the fourth and the margin never stopped growing.

"A good five days," Kerr said, now that the team's stay in Las Vegas for camp and the opener is complete. "And now we're off to Malaga." □

(AP Photo/John Locher)

## Raonic edges Tiafoe in an epic first-round match at Toronto tournament

Associated Press

**TORONTO (AP)** — Canada's Milos Raonic beat American Frances Tiafoe 6-7 (12), 7-6 (4), 6-3 in an epic first-round match Monday night at the National Bank Open. The ninth-seeded Tiafoe outlasted the Canadian in a 20-minute tiebreaker in the first set. But Raonic, who grew up in nearby Thornhill, Ontario, took the second set in a tiebreaker and went on to complete the victory in 2 hours, 44 minutes. This is Raonic's third tournament appearance since returning to the ATP Tour in June after an injury absence of nearly two years.

"It doesn't matter how much you do the right things, you never know when things (will) click and

things come together for you," Raonic said. "For me, it's incredibly special for it to be here."

On the deciding point of the first set, a Raonic return clipped the tape on top of the net, popped up in the air and bounced on Tiafoe's side.

The American lunged forward and made a cross-court winner. However, Tiafoe grabbed the top of the net as his momentum took him forward, which would normally cost him the point. However, the chair umpire ruled in Tiafoe's favor and a second on-court official confirmed the decision.

A Tennis Canada statement from tournament referee Tony Cho explained the ruling: "Tiafoe touched

the area between the singles stick and net post. This area is considered a permanent fixture so not part of the net."

Raonic said the original call went his way but the umpire changed his mind. The discussion then shifted to which part of the net was touched, he added.

"I don't have faith that they were being completely honest, but it is what it is," Raonic said. "I think they just handled it badly. Whatever the rule (was), I just don't think it was handled (well)." The partisan crowd at Sobey's Stadium voiced its disapproval and Raonic smashed his racket on the player's bench.

Raonic was able to reset. He finished with a 37-8



Canada's Milos Raonic plays a point back to Frances Tiafoe, of the United States, during the first day of the men's National Bank Open tennis tournament in Toronto, Monday, Aug. 7, 2023.

(Cole Burston/The Canadian Press via AP)

edge in aces.

"Good play and good fortune kind of got me through," he said.

Raonic has one of four wild cards for this week's 56-man singles competi-

tion. He will face Japanese qualifier Taro Daniel in the next round.

In the late match, Italy's Matteo Arnaldi beat Vasek Pospisil of Vernon, British Columbia, 6-4, 6-4. □



# Messi's exit leaves a big hole at PSG as the club frets over Mbappe and Neymar

By Jerome Pugmire  
Associated Press

**PARIS (AP)** — There's a big hole in the Paris Saint-Germain locker room where Lionel Messi used to sit. The way things are going at under-pressure PSG, Kylian Mbappe may also soon be vacating his spot — and maybe even Neymar too. Soccer fans around the world took a greater interest in watching the French league last season when PSG boasted superstars Messi, Mbappe and Neymar in attack.

Those PSG fans who thought it wise to jeer the record seven-time Ballon d'Or winner Messi last season may be regretting it now. Even more so if the club sells Mbappe to stop him leaving next summer for free as he intends.

With Messi gone to Inter Miami, it should fall to Mbappe and Neymar to lead the attack. But with Mbappe mired in a transfer standoff and Neymar still feeling his way back from his latest injury, there's a possibility neither will start the home game against modest Lorient on Saturday.

Mbappe could be left out as PSG tries to sell him.



PSG's Kylian Mbappe, right, celebrates with PSG's Neymar after scoring a disallowed goal during the Champions League round of 16 first leg soccer match between Paris Saint Germain and Bayern Munich, at the Parc des Princes stadium, in Paris, France, Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2023.

(AP Photo/Christophe Ena, File)

PSG has received a world record \$332 million bid from Saudi Arabian team Al-Hilal for Mbappe, who is widely thought to want to join Real Madrid next season on a free transfer, complete with a massive signing-on fee. Mbappe has been training alone and was left off the recent tour to Japan and South Korea.

PSG president Nasser Al-Khelaifi is reportedly hugely disappointed at Mbappe, having offered him a mas-

sive contract to sign a new contract in May last year reportedly worth 6 million euros (\$6.6 million) per month.

Messi's move to Miami came after Argentina's World Cup winner didn't sign the contract extension that Qatar-backed PSG offered him. If Mbappe goes as well, it would further deprive the French league of some star quality, dampening early interest in the season particularly outside of

France.

"It's a decision that goes beyond the players. It's a question for the directors," PSG captain Marquinhos said. "You always want great players next to you, I hope there will be a good solution so that he can come back and help us this season."

France's leading sports daily L'Equipe said on Monday evening that Neymar, who is under contract until 2025, also wants to leave this

summer. PSG did not comment.

Losing Mbappe and Neymar would be a massive blow to the prestige of the French league, which opens with Nice hosting Lille on Friday night, but would also be the wake-up call PSG needs after yet another season of complacency and over-reliance on Mbappe and other star performers.

For while PSG won a record 11th French title last season, the second half of the campaign was dismal. Unbeaten before the World Cup started in November, PSG lost 10 matches overall in 2023 in all competitions.

PSG lost three home games in the league at Parc des Princes, which was once a fortress, including back-to-back defeats to Rennes and Lyon without scoring a goal.

Even Lorient, which finished in 10th, won 3-1 in Paris, while a 3-1 defeat in Monaco saw Marquinhos and Neymar arguing with sporting director Luis Campos, who is now at odds with the club's hierarchy.

Christophe Galtier was fired and the former Barcelona coach Enrique was hired to replace him. □



France's Kenza Dali is congratulated by teammate Kadidiatou Diani, right, after scoring her team's second goal during the Women's World Cup round of 16 soccer match between France and Morocco in Adelaide, Australia, Tuesday, Aug. 8, 2023.

(AP Photo/James Elsby)

Associated Press

**ADELAIDE, Australia (AP)** — Eugenie Le Sommer scored twice as France advanced to the Women's World Cup quarterfinals with a 4-0 win on Tuesday that ended Morocco's historic debut run at the global tourna-

ment.

France's all-time leading scorer, Le Sommer struck once in each half as her country moved into a showdown with co-host Australia in Brisbane on Saturday for a place in the semifinals.

A three-goal burst in nine

## France ends Morocco's run and advances to the quarterfinals of the Women's World Cup

minutes took the game away from Morocco, with Kadidiatou Diani, Kenza Dali and Le Sommer all scoring to give France a 3-0 lead after 23 minutes at Adelaide's Hindmarsh Stadium.

Le Sommer headed in a fourth in the 70th to complete the win and end Morocco's campaign.

The Moroccans became the first Arab nation to advance to the knockout stage.

The Atlas Lions were the first Arab team to register a win in the competition by beating South Korea in the group stage. They followed that by upsetting group winner Colombia to

advance to the round of 16 at the expense of No. 2-ranked Germany.

But overcoming France, one of the tournament favorites, was a step too far for Reynald Pedros' team. Diani opened the scoring in the 15th minute when left unmarked in front of goal to head in Sakina Karchaoui's cross from the left.

It was Diani's fourth goal of the tournament after her hat trick in France's 6-3 win over Panama in its final Group F match.

Dali scored five minutes later after Diani cut back from the right. Dali struck a first-time shot low into the corner to beat Morocco goalkeeper Khadija Er-Rmichi.

And France was 3-0 up when Diani blocked the attempted clearance of Nesryne El Chad into the path of Le Sommer to convert.

Le Sommer got a second goal when heading in at the far post from Vicki Becho's looping cross with 20 minutes left in regulation. France lost a friendly to Australia leading into the tournament.

The teams will meet again after the Matildas advanced to the quarterfinals with a 2-0 win over Denmark. Star striker Sam Kerr returned from calf injury to make her first appearance at this World Cup as a second-half substitute against the Danes. □